ENHANCING ENGLISH TEACHERS' PEDAGOGICAL COMPETENCE THROUGH *LESSON STUDY* ACTIVITIES

Margana (Agana_2002@yahoo.com)

State University of Yogyakarta
Karangmalang, Yogyakarta

***Abstract**: This article deals with the implementation of Lesson Study to enhance pedagogical competence of English teachers of senior high schools at Bantul Regency, Yogyakarta. It is aimed at describing the implementation of Lesson Study at 5 senior high schools. The Lesson Study was implemented in five cycles. There were 10 English teachers involved in the study. They engaged in three activities, namely Plan, Do, and See. In PLAN, the 10 English teachers under the lecturer's supervision did lesson planning. In DO, one of the English teachers acted out as a model teacher and the rest observed the teaching and learning process targeting learner activities as the angle of the observation practices. In SEE, the participants were engaged in reflecting the teaching learning process. Two techniques: observation and interview were utilized to obtain data from the participants. The result of the study shows that 10 English teachers involved in the study got direct pedagogical competence through the implementation of Lesson Study. Added to this, they claim that the Lesson Study activities provide them with lesson planning skills and teaching skills and encourage them to be self-confident in conducting the English teaching and learning process.*

***Key words**: English Teacher, Lesson Study, Pedagogical Competence*

Nowadays, the Indonesian government via its national education department has been promoting four national standard types of teaching profession, namely personal, social or interpersonal, professional, and pedagogical competences. Those four types of competences are stated in Act 14 Verse 4 in 2005. With regard to this act, all teachers of any levels are demanded to have the four types of competences to successfully conduct their teaching and learning process. In addition, those four types of competence become the indicators for achieving a certificate of being professional teachers.

Personal competence deals with the way teachers behave. It is concerned with good commitment, discipline, honesty, responsibility towards their duties, and the like. Social competence refers to the social, emotional, and cognitive skills and behaviors that teachers need for successful social matters. It is a term used to

describe the teachers' knowledge of how to interact with their colleagues, students, and other parties. It also deals with one's ability to use a variety of social behaviors that suit a given interpersonal situation and that make others pleased in each situation. Social competence refers to possessing and using the ability to integrate thinking, feeling and behavior to achieve social tasks and outcomes valued in the host context and culture. In a school setting, these tasks and outcomes include accessing the school curriculum successfully, meeting associated personal social and emotional needs, and developing transferable skills and attitudes of value beyond school.

Beside the two types of competences above, teachers are demanded to have high professional competence and pedagogical competence. The former relates to having high knowledge of the fields of their study backgrounds. For example, English teachers have to be good at their macro English language skills (listening, speaking, reading and writing) and micro English language skills (vocabulary, structure/grammar, pronunciation, spelling, orthography, and the like). The latter is concerned with possessing skills of teaching strategies which include (1) designing syllabus, lesson plan, materials, media, assessment, etc, (2) managing teaching and learning process, (3) conducting evaluation of the process of teaching and learning.

Of the four types of competence, pedagogical competence should be intensely developed as it deals with how to engage in the process of teaching and learning which gives direct effects on students' English language achievement. In other words, improving pedagogical competence is urgent for English teachers as it is more concerned with how English teachers manage classroom interactions that drive students to willingly learn the targeted English materials.

To improve the pedagogical competence can be done through many ways such as in-service training of how to teach English, team teaching, workshop, peer teaching or micro-teaching, lesson study, and others. Of the identified ways, lesson study activities are believed to highly contribute to the development of pedagogical competence of the English teachers on the grounds that lesson study activities offer direct experience on the aspects of the pedagogical competence. Added to this, all teachers who are involved in the Lesson Study actively engage in lesson planning, managing teaching and learning process, and assessment practices. For those reasons, this paper presents the description of the implementation of Lesson Study activities to improve pedagogical competence of English teachers of senior high schools at Bantul Regency.

To understand the main issue of this paper, the writer outlines it into some issues which include the background of the study, literature review, research methods, and research findings. To end the discussion, some final remarks are made. Each issue is presented below.

There are two key words stated in the title of this paper. They are pedagogical competence and lesson study. Both are reviewed in this paper to theoretically underlie the discussion of the issue above. Each is presented below.

1. Pedagogical competence

Pedagogical competence refers to skills of teachers to deal with three aspects of teaching skills, namely lesson planning, implementing teaching and learning process, and assessing students' learning. The pedagogical competence

In terms of the aspects of pedagogical competence, a number of experts have different classification. For example, Tuan et al. (2000 propose eight categories of teaching competence. They include (1) designing instruction to gain selected objectives; (2) getting information about learners' needs and learning progress; (3) performing acceptable written and oral expression and knowledge of the subject; (4) managing time, space, materials, and equipment for instruction; (5) having good communications with learners; (6) utilizing various and appropriate instructional methods; (7) maintaining a positive learning environment; and (8) maintaining appropriate classroom behavior.

They also review sub-teaching competence applied in three steps of teaching, namely (1) before teaching (preparation), (2) whilst-teaching (classroom teaching), and (3) after teaching. The following present part of pedagogical competence as reflected in the three steps of teaching. In preparation step, English teachers are encouraged to deal with (1) analyzing of students' classroom culture, (2) analyzing students' characteristics, (3) identifying appropriate goals for the lesson, (4) analyzing the contents of the lesson, (5) identifying students' preconceptions and/or difficulties in learning the language focus, (6) providing curriculum resources for the lesson, (7) designing various teaching strategies for the lesson, (8) designing various content representations.

In main activities, English teachers are concerned with (1) explaining the materials concerned, (2) encouraging students to conduct communication practices, (3) monitoring students' learning, (4) assessment of students' learning outcomes, (5) stimulating students' willingness to participate in learning, (6) accomplishing of lesson goals, (7) controlling of classroom management, (8) promoting student cooperation, (9) establishing positive attitude toward learning target language, (10) providing a low-pressure learning environment, (11) emphasizing different students' abilities.

After teaching, English teachers deal with (1) reflecting on previous teaching flow, (2) reflecting on content representation, (3) reflecting on students' learning, (4) making suggestions concerning content coverage and organization of the textbook, (5) reflecting on construction of the learning environment, and (6) reflecting on peer and mentor teachers' suggestions.

According to Act 4 Year 2005 Verse 3, pedagogical competence at least consists of eight issues, namely (1) having good insights of education aspects, (2) being familiar with students' characteristics, (3) having good understanding of how to develop curriculum and syllabus, (4) being able to design teaching and learning process, (5) implementing teaching and learning process, (6) having good skills at using instructional technology, (7) assessing students' learning, and (8) developing students to actualize students' potentials.

2. Lesson Study

The term *Lesson Study* is originally derived from Japanese words, namely *jugyou* which means instruction or lesson(s) and *kenkyu* which refers to research or study (Lewis, et al., 2006). The term *jugyou kenkyu* means a large family of instructional improvement strategies by which a group of teachers conduct an observation of a live classroom lesson performed by a team member and analyze it collaboratively for the purpose of teaching profession improvement (Lewis, 2002a; Wong-Iversion & Yoshida, 2005). In other words, Lesson Study is one of the teaching modes which involves some people to be actively involved in a series of teaching and learning processes beginning with (1) designing lesson plans, (2) selecting and developing materials, media, assessment and the like, (3) implementing the teaching and learning process, and (4) doing a reflection of the process of teaching and learning with the use of students as the angel of conferring the feedback by observers.

In line with the definition above, Sum (2003) states that *Lesson Study* is a type of a teacher professional improvement program to collaboratively engage in some teaching activities which include planning, implementing, observing, and reflecting on the lessons conducted. Perry, Lewis, and Akiba (2002:2) also propose a definition of *Lesson Study* as a teacher-led instructional enhancement cycle in which a group of teachers deal with (1) formulating student learning objectives and long-term development, (2) sketching a research lesson targeted to achieve the designed objectives, (3) utilizing the lesson, (4) conducting a reflection of the lesson with regard to the peer observations conducted by teachers involved, and (5) implementing the revised lesson in another classroom, if preferred and improve upon it again.

With regard to the proposed definitions, in this paper *LS* is defined as a systematic teacher professional and pedagogical development carried out by a group of teachers to be engaged in a series of teaching and learning activities. The activities include planning a lesson, implementing a lesson, and doing a reflection of the process of teaching and learning.

In conducting Lesson Study, there are some parties. They include a teacher as a model, students, observers, and a facilitator. The model teacher serves as a teacher who handles the teaching practice. As a model teacher, he/she should not be a senior teacher or professional teacher. He/she can be a junior teacher who wants to improve his/her teaching skills. Observers deal with conducting observations of the process of teaching and learning. They are assigned to complete the observation instrument and to note the interesting evidence performed by students during the process of the teaching and learning. The observers can have the same fields of the demonstrated teaching or have different fields. For example, the model of a teacher is an English teacher who teaches English as the subject, but the observers can be English teachers or non-English teachers. Even, stake holders or student parents can be observers of a lesson study. A facilitator has a role to facilitate the model teacher and other parties to successfully conduct lesson study. The facilitator provides valuable input in every step of lesson study. The entire process of *Lesson Study* is documented. This documentation is used to further analyze shortcomings and strengths of the lesson

study. Cerbin and Kopp (2006:252) state that in documenting the lesson study there are two closely related parts of LS. They include (1) lesson documentation and (2) study documentation. The former embodies (a) the learning goal, (b) the lesson plan, (c) a rationale for the lesson topic and lesson design, and (d) additional materials. The latter consists of (a) the student learning goals, challenges, problems, and any issues gathered, (b) a description of the types of data gathered and method utilized to study the lesson, (c) a discussion of data analysis and a synopsis of findings, (d) conclusions about the lesson, and (e) supplementary instruments used in the LS such as checklist, rubrics, and observation guidelines.

In terms of steps of *Lesson Study*, Lewis, Perry, and Murata (2006) propose four cycles which include (1) the Study of Curriculum and Formulation of the Learning Goals, (2) Plan, (3) Conduct Research, and (4) Reflection. The four cycles are described in Figure 1.

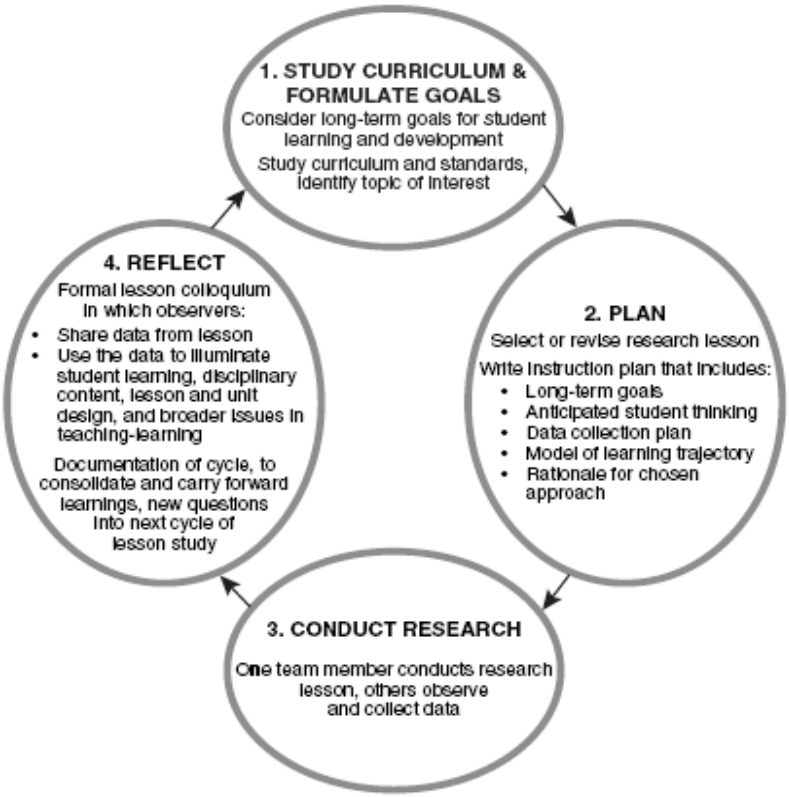

FIGURE 1. *Lesson study cycle.*

Different from the four cycles above, Saito et al. (2006) divides *LS* into three, namely (1) *PLAN*, (2) *DO*, and (3) *SEE* (*Plan-Do-See*). In *PLAN*, the model teacher and other parties involved design the lesson plan together. They discuss the topic of the study, materials, media, teaching methods, teaching techniques, tasks implemented, assessments, and the like with regard to the curriculum and students' characteristics. They also design the observation sheets and the seat arrangements of students which are used during the observation activities.

In *DO*, the model teacher demonstrates his/her teaching in class while observers conduct a classroom observation. During the observation session, the observers note interesting evidence as performed by students starting from opening class to closing. For example, the observers do note-taking students' response to the greeting of the model teacher. Also, they write the mode of interactions between teacher and students, students and teacher, students and students, students and the materials or tasks given by the model teacher.

In *SEE*, the model teacher is given an opportunity to reflect his/her own teaching demonstration with reference to the weaknesses and strengths that she/he performs. Following this, all observers present the results of the observations using students as the angle of giving comments. In this step, the facilitator is driven to confer valuable feedback for the betterment of the upcoming teaching practices.

In terms of its benefits, *Lesson Study* confers some valuable benefits all parties involved. Lewis (2005:115) outlines multiple benefits which include (1) getting knowledge of subject matter and instruction, (2) improving the ability to conduct student classroom observation, (3) establishing collegial networks, (4) linking the daily practice to long-term goals, (5) having stronger motivation and sense of efficacy and (6) improving the quality of available lesson plans.

With regard to the benefits above, the utilization of *Lesson Study* to develop the pedagogical competence of English teachers should be institutionalized. This suggests that *Lesson Study* should be widely disseminated to other English teachers at any levels including English teachers of senior high schools in Bantul regency as it is believed to be an effective individual professional development. Lewis (2002) states that Lesson Study can be used to enhance English teachers' pedagogical skills as they can see feedback for their own teaching and getting new ideas from observing others conduct teaching practices.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study was classified as a case study. It voluntarily invited 10 English teachers from different senior high schools in Bantul Regency. They were all graduates of undergraduate degree majoring English Education. They were randomly selected to actively participate in three steps of lesson study activities, namely *Plan*, *Do*, and *See*.

The instruments of the study were a list of observation rubric and of questions for interviews. The techniques used in this study consisted of observation and interview. To back up the data gathering, audio-visual recording was employed. A list of observation rubric was designed to deal with classroom

observation when they were involved in Do. A list of questions for interviews was designed to get information on teachers' understanding of pedagogical competence and their reflection of their participation on the *Lesson Study* activities. The gathered data were then analyzed with the employment of a descriptive qualitative.

RESEARCH FINDINGS

In reference to the data analysis collected through interview techniques with English teachers involved in lesson study, the results show that lesson study can improve their pedagogical competence. Through participating in lesson study practices English teachers sampled as the participants of the study got direct and real experience of pedagogical competence as performed in a series of three cycles of lesson study: *Plan*, *Do*, and *SEE*. During *Plan*, participants got direct experience in preparing a lesson plan that embodies how to develop learning objectives, to write indicators, to select contextual and meaningful language materials. During *Do*, teachers involved in lesson study gained real experience in managing teaching and learning process. In *SEE*, teachers obtained experience of how to give comments of teaching practices with the use students as the angles. Added to this, they shared experience of pedagogical competence.

According to the participants, lesson study practices provided them with direct experience of pedagogical competences which include (1) planning a lesson, (2) managing class, and (3) assessing students' learning. In terms of planning a lesson, English teachers as participants of lesson study gained direct experience of how to interpret standard of competence and basic competencies written in the curriculum, to develop lesson plans; to select the language focus (listening, reading, speaking, and writing) of English teaching and learning; to select and develop materials; to develop learning tasks, select suitable teaching methods and techniques; to select and develop media; and to design tests used in English language teaching and learning process.

In terms of managing classroom activities, according to the participants, they gained real experience of how to open class; how to attract students' attention; to provide students with apperception; to outline teaching and learning practices; to apply some teaching methods and techniques; to comprehend students' different characteristics; to manage learners; to explain learning materials; to ask students questions; to respond to students' questions; to encourage students to learn; to give students' reinforcement, to manage individual, group, and classical feedback; to personalize students to do the given task; to monitor students' activities; to summarize the material learned; to conduct a reflection, to give students advice; and to end the class.

In terms of assessing students' English learning, the participants also claimed that they achieved direct and real experience of how to utilize the assessment of students' learning in the form of performance and competence tests used in teaching productive language skills (speaking and writing) and receptive language skills (listening and reading). They also got experience of how to score the tests applied.

CONCLUSIONS

In reference to the above findings, the utilization of lesson study is believed to improve the pedagogical competence as reflected in three cycles of Lesson Study practices: Plan, Do, and See. In each cycle, English teachers as team members of Lesson Study gain benefits of it. Therefore, LS should be widely promoted to all teachers including English teachers of any levels as it confers many benefits one of which is to enhance pedagogical competence which include knowledge of planning a lesson, knowledge of managing teaching and learning process, and assessing students' language learning. To sum up, *Lesson Study* is a practical, integrated, and progressive model for professional pedagogical knowledge building and for establishing better networks and high self-confidence among teachers.

REFERENCES

Cerbin, W. & Kopp, B. (2006). Lesson Study as a Model for Building Pedagogical Knowledge and Improving Teaching. *International Journal of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education*, volume 18, Number 3, 250-257

Perry, R., Lewis, C., & Akiba, M. (2002). *Lesson Study in the San Mateo-Foster City School District*. Paper presented at the American Educational Research Association(2002 Annual Meeting), New Orleans, LA. Available*: http://www.lessonresearch.net/articlescenter.html*

Lewis, C. (2002a). Does lesson study have a future in the United States? *Nagoya Journal of Education and Human Development, 1*(1), 1–23.

Lewis, C. (2002). *Lesson study: A handbook of teacher-led instructional change*. Philadelphia: Research for Better Schools.

Lewis, C. (2005). How do teachers learn during lesson study? In P. Wang-Iverson & M. Yoshida (Eds.). *Building our understanding of lesson study*. Philadelphia: Research for Better Schools, Inc.

Saito, E. et al. (2006). Development of school based in-service teacher training under the Indonesian Mathematics and Science Teacher Education Project. Improving Schools, 9(1): 47-59.

Tuan, H. et al. (2000). Developing a pedagogical content competence evaluation for apprentice physical science teachers - A case study. *Proc. Natl. Sci. Counc. ROC(D)* Vol. 10, No. 1, 2000. pp.1-14.

Departemen Pendidikan Nasional. (2005). Undang-undang No.14 Tahun 2005 Tentang Guru da Dosen. Jakarta.

Wang-Iverson, P. (2002). *Why Lesson Study*. http://www.rbs.org/lesson_study/confenrence/2002/paper/wang.shtml. Accessed on August 16, 2010.

Bio-data

Margana is one of the staff members of English Education Department, FBS UNY. He is a secretary of Centre for Language Development and Services. He got a Master of Humanity (M.Hum.) in Linguistics from Gajah Mada University in 1999. He also obtained a Master of Arts (M.A.) in Applied Linguistics from University of Newcastle in 2005. Now, he is undertaking a Doctoral program at University of Gadjah Mada majoring in linguistics.

Margana
Email Address : Agana_2002@yahoo.com
Mobile Phone : 081904111450
Home : (0274) 4477155
Office : (0274) 550844/45